

February 24, 2022

Dear Committee Members,

We are Michael and Sharon Serow of South Windsor, CT.

We are testifying on the Governor's proposed budget H.B. No. 5037 (COMM) AN ACT ADJUSTING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2023 that **unfortunately does not include critical funding for our safety net providers and their employees.**

Our direct support providers have gone for many years with no increase. Yet they work very hard with a limited budget to support our most vulnerable residents.

Connecticut's direct support providers are in crisis mode because the effects of the pandemic have impacted their ability to attract and retain direct care workers and other employees. This staff is critically important to the safety and well-being of many of Connecticut's residents with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD), including our own family.

Our disabled daughter and others like her cannot function on their own. They are important members of the Connecticut community who live and work here. Our daughter is only able to live and work with the support of our essential direct support providers. Her agencies are non-profit agencies who vitally need funding through the state budget. She is only thriving because of these community supports.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR MOST VULNERABLE CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS WHO LIVE AND WORK HERE, BUT ARE UNABLE TO FUNCTION WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF OUR COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROVIDERS. THESE COMMUNITY AGENCIES NEED TO HAVE CRITICAL SUPPORT THROUGH FUNDING IN THE STATE BUDGET.

PLEASE HELP US AND DON'T FORGET OUR SPECIAL NEEDS COMMUNITY!

PLEASE INCLUDE THE \$150 MILLION IN THE STATE BUDGET FOR OUR NON-PROFIT PROVIDERS! Without your help, our state's community service delivery system will continue to shrink and our loved ones will bear the brunt of this loss.

Thank you for your support in addressing this vital need.

Respectfully Submitted by Michael and Sharon Serow